



Follow-through Inspection Report

Drumchapel High School

March 2007

The Inspection

Following their inspection of the school in October and November 2004, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIe) published a report on standards and quality in Drumchapel High School in March 2005. Working with the education authority, the school had prepared an action plan indicating how they would address the main points for action identified in the original report.

After consultation with HMIe, it was agreed that this follow-through report would be the responsibility of the education authority. Members of the Education Improvement Service had visited the school at various times throughout 2005 and 2006 to monitor and evaluate the extent to which the school was continuing to improve the quality of its work and to evaluate the progress made in responding to the main points for action.

Continuous Improvement

The school had responded to the report in a very professional, comprehensive and structured manner. Staff at all levels had shown a willingness to address the main points for action to secure improvements. The Headteacher and senior managers had led teachers effectively, and teachers had participated in a range of focused groups to take initiatives forward. This had built upon the existing good developmental practice within the school.

The authority's Education Improvement Service had supported the school through a range of organised in-service provision at authority and whole-school level and through less formal contact at departmental level. School staff had willingly taken advantage of these opportunities for professional development to enhance their own skills and to improve the quality of the learning experience for young people.

The school now has in place a policy on teaching and learning which is monitored and evaluated. The school had established working groups to secure improvements in learning and teaching, with particular emphasis on formative assessment strategies and the use of ICT. Although still in the early stages of implementation this had begun to have an impact on improving the quality of learning and teaching.

Pupils' attainment in SQA examinations had shown signs of improvement in 2006. By the end of S4, the proportion of pupils attaining five or more awards at SCQF level 5 had increased to 8%. By the end of S5, pupils' attainment was increasing at SCQF levels 3, 4, 5 and 6. By the end of S6, the percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more awards at level 3 had increased to 69%.

In 2006 attainment at the S4 stage was mixed. While there had been commendable increases from 60% to 62% in English and Maths and from 6% to 8% in the number of pupils gaining five or more awards at level 5, the figures for level 4 and level 3 declined slightly. This was due to a decline in boys' attainment at these levels.

In 2004, the school had taken a more flexible approach to the curriculum with the aim of providing pupils with a broader set of skills. Pupils had undertaken seven courses, with the balance of time being taken up by a range of enterprise units at Access 3 and Intermediate 1 level, including Food Preparation Technique, Basic Video Production, Enterprise through Craft, Music Performance and Enterprise Activity. However, the school had experienced changes in staffing and difficulties with the accreditation of some of the units. The school had, therefore, decided to revert to the previous curriculum where pupils were presented for up to eight courses.

By the end of S2, there had been a decline in overall attainment in national assessments. The school should continue to develop approaches to monitoring and tracking the attainment of all pupils to ensure that all are making appropriate progress in line with their prior levels of attainment.

The school had made very good progress improving the destinations of pupils leaving school. The proportion of pupils leaving school to go to training or employment had significantly increased. The proportion of pupils 'Not in Employment, Education or Training' had declined from 39% in 2002 to 24% in 2005.

Moreover, in a broader measure of achievement, the HMIE report highlighted that "pupils showed good skills and achievements across a broad range of activities, including some distinguished performances in competitions at local and national level". Since then, pupils had continued to demonstrate these achievements through a range of awards. For links with other countries and education in international matters, the school received the Achievement in International Education Award in December 2004 and in June 2005 the school won the prestigious Scottish Education Award in the 'Schools for All' category in recognition of its work in integrating pupils into the school. The school had continued to foster confident individuals who could contribute to their community and demonstrate key citizenship skills. A group of seven senior pupils, who became known nationally as the 'Glasgow Girls' for their campaigning work for better treatment of asylum seekers, won several awards in 2005, including The Great Scot Unsung Hero Award and the Campaigner of the Year in the Politician of the Year Award. A group of S1/S2 pupils won the runner-up prize in the Challenge Glasgow Competition which develops research and presentation skills through independent learning and the use of ICT.

In 2006 pupils won Platinum (the highest available) in the Glasgow Education Enterprise Awards and a number of pupils received Princess Diana Memorial Awards for Citizenship. Pupils had won awards for Culinary Excellence and were the first Scottish pupils to win first prize in the Hamburg International Culinary Competition.

The school had continued to enhance its reputation in the community and for the first time in recent years had been able to establish a School Board. This was set up in March 2006. Moreover, the number of pupils from the local area choosing to be educated within Drumchapel High School had increased steadily from 70% in 2000 to 93% in 2006.

The school had developed a strong ethos of self-evaluation and improvement, evidenced by the wide range of teacher groups taking initiatives forward. Morale was high within the school among staff and pupils and staff were supportive of each other.

Progress Towards the Main Points for Action

Main point for action 1

The initial inspection report identified three main points for action. This section evaluates the progress made with each of the action points and the resulting improvements for pupils and other stakeholders.

Take the lead in establishing a co-ordinated multi agency strategy in the local neighbourhood, designed specifically to improve school attendance and enhance the capacity of parents, carers and the community to motivate and support children and young people in their learning.

The school has made good progress towards meeting this recommendation.

The school, with the support of the education authority, had worked very hard to establish improved links with a range of agencies within the local community. It had set up an initial meeting with agency representatives and a commitment to joint working was established, with each of the contributing agencies submitting various proposals for implementation. However, circumstances external to the school, for example, staffing within social work and the restructuring to create Community Health and Care Partnerships had meant that further meetings of the steering group had not taken place. There was a commitment from the various agencies to improve partnerships. However, the school would need continued support from the education authority to establish a structure to enable partnership working to meet the needs of the most vulnerable pupils.

There were examples of good partnership working to improve pupils' attendance and better meet their physical, social and emotional needs. For example, the police had recently supported the school in a Truancy Watch initiative. The Step-Up initiative supported pupils at primary school identified as experiencing difficulties with their personal and social skills. Following up the very successful poster and leaflet campaign in the community, the school had initiated a series of home visits and the Joint Support Team had continued to identify vulnerable young people and had put in place a support strategy. The school had closely monitored irregular attenders and communication with parents had taken place.

Various steps to make the curriculum more relevant to pupils' needs had taken place and an alternative education provision, through such agencies as Motiv8, Activate and Right Track, continued to provide effective support to pupils. The operation of the Attendance Council had been reviewed and it now meets every six weeks during the school day. This had encouraged greater parental/carer attendance at these meetings to discuss their child's progress. Overall attendance had improved steadily year on year from a low of 72% in 2002 to just under 80% in 2006. However, despite these improvements attendance continued to impact on pupils' progress. The school should continue to work with parents and partner agencies to improve attendance.

The school had worked hard to promote the value of education within the community. The school had monitored individual pupils who were not achieving their full potential at school and, as well as the regular pastoral care procedures, additional meetings between parents and Senior Managers had been arranged to encourage greater participation. There had been ongoing consultation with parents over the format of parents' evenings to encourage greater attendance and this had had an effect at all stages in session 2005-2006. Attendance at S1/S2 parents meetings had increased from 46% to 62%; in S3 it had increased from 33% to 45% and in S5/6 from 33% to 39%. The school had initiated a scheme whereby all pupils in S1/S2 had been issued with a school bag and parents had been asked to encourage its use. Nearly all pupils are continuing to use the bag and the scheme has been repeated in 2006-2007 session.

In addition to the regular Newsletters to parents and the delivery of the Drumchapel School video to every home, there had been targeted visits to parents to increase the school identity within the community. The school had a high profile in the community and positive images featured regularly in local and national press. The local newspaper, "The Voice", had in recent times, carried articles on the school's achievements and the importance of attendance. In August 2006, the Evening Times featured an article about the school's breakfast club. As a result the school had improved its reputation in the community, and more parents and carers are now choosing to send their children to Drumchapel High School.

Main point for action 2

Improve aspects of teaching and learning, including greater use of ICT, and a more demanding pace in some classes.

The school had made good progress towards meeting this main point for action.

The school had taken a commendable strategic approach to improving learning and teaching across the school. The teaching and learning policy was now in place and staff had been supported in its implementation by focussed staff development. Staff were now engaged in discussing teaching and learning and sharing good practice.

The school is now working towards a coherent framework for assessment, recording and reporting within its current development plan and had begun to develop approaches to 'formative assessment' as part of its policy on learning and teaching.

The well-judged implementation of the teaching and learning policy had raised teachers' awareness of the importance of pace of learning both in lessons and through courses. Some departments had taken steps to raise the level of challenge, for example, higher attaining pupils in maths in S1/S2 were offered selected level F work with credit level work starting in January of S2. Modern languages had also commenced Standard Grade

work in S2. The English department had implemented the New Horizons programme, which breaks down tasks into smaller components and increases opportunities for quick feedback. Home economics, drama and music had successfully presented pupils within the National Qualifications framework as an alternative to Standard Grade.

Teachers in a number of departments made effective use of ICT to enhance pupils' learning experiences. For example, Scholar software was used with senior pupils in chemistry, biology, maths and computing. Pupils in home economics used digital cameras and computerised sewing machines while in drama pupils used modern equipment for lighting, sound and editing. In mathematics, teachers used Smartboards to involve pupils more actively in lessons. In geography every topic now has a PowerPoint presentation as a key resource. The training needs of staff had been met with a coordinated CPD programme. The school had invested in data projectors for some classrooms and had made two additional ICT suites. However, in a number of classes access to ICT was still limited. The school should continue to improve the resources for ICT.

**Main point
for action 3**

Develop the school's approaches to self-evaluation, including clarifying and improving the effectiveness of senior managers' links with departments.

The school had made very good progress towards meeting this main point for action.

The school had implemented its policy on monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning and this included classroom visits by senior managers and Principal Teachers. Classroom visits had an agreed focus. For example, visits had focussed on pupils on task, start of lesson, use of praise and a variety of teaching strategies.

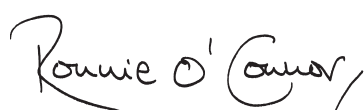
Senior managers shared their findings to promote consistency in the feedback they provided to teachers. The good practice gathered from these visits was shared with all teachers. Additional opportunities to share good practice had taken place on in-service days. Teachers spoke positively about the classroom visits and the increased opportunities to engage in discussions on learning and teaching.

The head teacher and the link senior manager had conducted annual interviews with Principal Teachers, in which they accounted for departmental performance across a range of indicators, including SQA performance.

The link role of senior managers had been further clarified and strengthened. Senior managers liaised with departments over their self-evaluation in relation to the authority's review procedures. They approved and monitored progress of the departmental improvement. They also liaised over staff development opportunities related to the implementation of the school improvement plan. Regular meetings with Principal Teachers and teachers ensured greater communication between departments and senior management. Teachers felt that senior managers had an increased knowledge and understanding of the work of their department.

**Conclusion
and Next
Steps**

The school had demonstrated its ability to continue to improve and had made good progress overall regarding the main points for action outlined in the report of March 2005. Since the inspection, the school had continued to build upon its positive ethos and the additional structures in place had enhanced its capacity for continuing improvement.



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